

OPFOR Key Tasks in Security Zone Operations At the National Training Center (NTC)

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Security zone operations on the NTC battlefield are often the most difficult for the OPFOR to execute and for units to attack; consequently, these missions offer excellent learning points and subjects for discussion.

The security zone is the quintessential example of a mobile defense in depth, which attempts to attrit, disrupt, and delay enemy forces, and, most often, successfully destroy them. The foundation for OPFOR success lies in the definition of the key tasks they must perform to achieve the stated purpose of the operation and succeed on the battlefield. This article discusses the OPFOR's key tasks during a security zone battle and suggests some BLUEFOR actions that could mitigate or neutralize them.

These tactical suggestions are not meant to be all-inclusive or present an approved solution, but they offer some simple actions that can dramatically change the outcome of a security zone battle. For the benefit of clarity, OPFOR will be referred to as friendly forces and BLUEFOR as enemy forces.

Understanding the Security Zone

The security zone, according to *TRADOC Pamphlet 350-16*, is "established when the defense is organized out of contact with the enemy." The security zone is placed in depth (15-50 km) and extends across the entire zone of responsibility (10-15 km). Furthermore, it is established in depth in front of 1st echelon units in the main defensive area; arrayed in initial, subsequent, and forward positions (see Figure 1). In simple terms, the security zone equates to a large counterreconnaissance force arrayed in depth ahead of the main battle area. At the NTC, an MRB (+) (11 x T-80s, 33 x BMPs, 200 x infantry, and 2 x 2A45M AT guns) normally defends against a brigade combat team (1 x armor task force, 1 x mechanized infantry task force, 1 x light infantry battalion).

Its task and purpose is to attrit and delay in sector, attacking enemy forces in order to provide time and space for 1st echelon defensive preparation. Implied tasks are

disrupting enemy maneuver and denying any effective direct or indirect fires from being placed on 1st echelon positions. Quite simply, the best way to accomplish this mission is to destroy enemy forces. Therefore, the planning process is focused on denying any enemy penetration of the security zone and arraying forces to completely destroy attacking forces. The desired end state consists of a destroyed enemy BCT, no penetration of the security zone rear boundary, 1st echelon positions protected from effective direct or indirect fires, and one MRC prepared to conduct follow-on offensive operations.

OPFOR Reconnaissance Goals

During planning, the MRB commander will develop and answer several critical questions, which basically parallel those developed prior to any defensive operation. (1) How do I establish reconnaissance in depth to maximize situational awareness? (2) How do I deny the enemy the ability to effectively gather intelligence on my defensive preparation and array of forces? (3) Where, how, and with what combat power and engineer assets do I build my engagement areas (initial, subsequent, and forward positions)? (4) How and where do I force the enemy to attack piecemeal into my engagement area? (5) What are the occupation, disengagement, repositioning, withdrawal, and counterattack criteria and times to execute? (6) Where and when do I commit my MRB reserve or the regimental combined arms reserve? (7) Where, when, and with what combat power do I counterattack? These are but a few of the proposed questions for the commander, but, clearly, one understands that the answers are only derived from an appreciation of terrain, friendly and enemy capabilities, and time, all of which are integrated into decision points. Ultimately, the OPFOR commander wants to create a battle where he controls the tempo and initiative throughout.

The answers to these questions are found in the key tasks necessary for accomplishing the security zone mission. The key tasks are divided into eight,

which are not meant to serve as "standardized" key tasks, but generally apply to every OPFOR security zone mission. During the planning process, these tasks will be modified and refined based on the principles of METT-T.

First, the OPFOR attempts to establish reconnaissance in depth in order to maximize situational awareness. Reconnaissance assets will stagger their infiltration along numerous ground and air routes in order to meet the commander's intent and will identify and, if required, destroy enemy forces in zone to facilitate the MRB's occupation. Division and regimental reconnaissance companies will array forces in depth in order to be capable of identifying and observing high payoff targets, to include enemy forces (both ground and air) in their tactical assembly areas, FARPs, BSAs, UMCPs, TOCs, artillery PAs, and the Q-36. Deep scouts will test local security of the attacking unit and will often intermingle with enemy forces during the hours of limited visibility to gather further intelligence, such as the location of engineer breaching and FASCAM assets, air defense assets, and task force task organization. Furthermore, scouts and stay-behind Division Reconnaissance Teams (DRTs) will be arrayed in depth to confirm the enemy course of action, report BDA, and enable the massing of indirect fires and CAS at key choke points along the enemy direction of attack.

The BLUEFOR Response

In order to counter the OPFOR's reconnaissance plan, BLUEFOR units must secure their assembly areas. They should conceal locations of forces through the use of terrain, camouflage nets, and repositioning during hours of limited visibility. Don't assume that OPFOR reconnaissance assets cannot be in the BLUEFOR sector prior to an offensive operation. Ultimately, the battle is won by the unit with the best situational awareness. Finally, BLUEFOR must develop a counterrecon plan, even in the offense, to secure their approach march. S2s must SITTEMP enemy recon locations, based

on terrain analysis, and develop a maneuver plan with the S3 to deny these platforms. "Counter-DRT" sweeps with aviation assets linked to infantry on the ground is the most successful technique.

Second, the OPFOR will focus on destroying all enemy reconnaissance assets; to include brigade reconnaissance troops, scout platoons, GSR teams, NBC reconnaissance, COLT teams, retrans teams, etc. The OPFOR will use a variety of techniques. Initially, the division and regimental reconnaissance companies will identify any enemy stay-behind forces during their infiltration. Next, when an MRB occupies its assigned sector, its focus is on "clearing the sector" of any enemy forces.

The combat reconnaissance platoon (CRPs) composed generally of three BMPs and two BRDMs) accomplishes this locally for the MRB by examining key terrain that facilitates observation of the sector. Normally, the CRPs initially clear key terrain at lower elevations using hunter-killer teams to identify and destroy these forces. In addition, dismounted infantry, upon occupying sector, will immediately conduct patrols of key terrain assigned to them in their area.

Simultaneously and in conjunction, the OPFOR conducts "DRT sweeps" with SOKOL (OPFOR attack aviation replicating HIND-Ds). SOKOL will use two aircraft to accomplish this mission. One aircraft attempts to identify enemy recon assets on key terrain at high elevations overlooking the zone, and it will either destroy these forces or will maneuver a second aircraft with a squad of dismounted infantry to a position to unload the infantry and destroy the target. SOKOL's actions are monitored by the MRB, and the MRB commander orients and focuses SOKOL's efforts based on regimental recon reports and the CRPs, who monitor both the OPFOR O&I net and MRB command net. This facilitates excellent situational awareness and timely and accurate reporting.

During hours of limited visibility, the OPFOR will establish a counterreconnaissance sector within the MRB zone. Normally, the CRPs will establish OPs along the FEBA, often to overwatch a situational or tactical obstacle emplaced during the hours of limited visibility. Each MRC will provide one MRP for counterrecon. Some forces will deploy forward and at least two thermal systems will be able to overwatch any portion of the obstacle work for redundancy. All forces within the MRB conducting counterrecon during limited visibility will report directly on the MRB command net. This facilitates situational awareness.

Once the counterrecon fight is over, these forces will revert back to their MRC net for command and control. The OPFOR does not want the enemy to attack at night. Though a challenging mission, attacking units would be maximizing their capabilities by conducting a night attack properly supported by effective command and control, reconnaissance, and fire support. Indirect delivered smoke placed on OPFOR battle positions and the enemy side of obstacles would severely limit the OPFOR's ability to destroy attacking enemy forces. (However, the gradual fielding of the BMP II, which has an effective thermal night sight, is beginning to change that situation.)

When the enemy recon assets begin movement into the security zone, the CRPs will cross-talk with the regimental recon assets in order to ensure the OPFOR is aware of the LD of the enemy recon assets, their composition, route of march, and infiltration techniques. Regimental recon assets will often displace off of key terrain for day observation in order to patrol dismounted into assembly areas or along key infiltration routes in order to be capable of identifying dismounted or mounted (HMMWV or Bradley) infiltration during limited visibility. These enemy recon assets will then be passed off to the MRB CRPs. Arrayed in depth behind the CRPs will be the reconnaissance screen of approximately one MRP from each MRC. Ideally, each vehicle has thermal capabilities, and the tanks possessing searchlights are arrayed on the flanks in order to illuminate a greater portion of the sector for non-thermal vehicles to orient fires.

The use of all visible and infrared light is tied to the execution of direct fires. Indirect illumination and searchlights are the two most common methods for illuminating the enemy. A hand-held illum flare or searchlight will not be employed unless a direct fire system is oriented on the location of the enemy. The OPFOR employs these through "hunter-killer" teams. For instance, one BMP may serve as the hunter. Once he identifies combat power attacking, he alerts a T-80 in depth by using night TRPs (both thermalized and marked with IR light signature). Once the T-80 identifies the TRP, the BMP counts down 3, 2, 1 then shoots the illum. This facilitates short duration of light and the ability to quickly identify and destroy targets. On the contrary, in a similar fashion the T-80 could illuminate a target with the searchlight for the BMP to destroy. Often, the OPFOR does not need the illumination because enemy units do not conduct proper PCIs to ensure the vehicles are not emitting light. Amazingly, some units attempt to infil-

trate with blackout drive or marker lights illuminated on their vehicles.

Furthermore, the OPFOR uses all assets available to contribute to the counterrecon fight. Dismounted infantry patrol obstacles and key terrain to deny the positioning of enemy recon assets and enemy air battle positions not covered by air defense assets. Other regimental assets in place, such as air defense, retrans, and IEW, also contribute to the counterreconnaissance fight by providing accurate reporting in addition to their primary duties. It is not uncommon for a SA-18 team to jump to the MRB net and report enemy movement in his sector or enemy aircraft on station to facilitate destruction. Overall, the ability to communicate to all assets in sector and their timely and accurate reporting enables the MRB commander to have unparalleled situational awareness and information dominance during the counterreconnaissance fight.

During the planning process, BLUEFOR units must fight their reconnaissance as a combat operation, which is fully supported and synchronized with the combat multipliers. This is the most important action other than the actual tactical maneuver of the attack. Too often, it appears that scouts are left to fend for themselves and not fully supported by all battlefield operating systems. Aviation assets, when available, must be used to identify OPFOR positions and provide timely and accurate reports to the infiltrating forces. Furthermore, scouts must obviously practice excellent light and noise discipline and phase scouts into sector throughout the hours of limited visibility. In addition, they can air assault scouts into position simultaneous to ground insertions. Particularly effective is the employment of deception SEAD fires along an air avenue of approach, which will not be used. When artillery is fired at night, the OPFOR immediately thinks SEAD. Unless the SEAD is employed perfectly, seconds prior to the aircraft, the OPFOR will reposition along the SEAD route to destroy aviation assets. Remember, don't assume that air defense assets are the sole source for air defense. The BMP main gun kills aircraft just as effectively as an SA-18. Therefore, one could potentially either fire deception SEAD or the SEAD early and air assault 2-3 hours later. These two methods would thoroughly deceive the OPFOR. Furthermore, scouts must call for indirect fires when contact is made and bypass OPFOR positions. Often, scouts become decisively engaged rather than focusing on reaching their assigned position to accomplish the commander's intent. Also, units must maintain surveillance along their LD. The OPFOR often em-

places obstacles very far forward to delay not only scouts, but also the attacking BCT. One technique used successfully by the OPFOR is employment of an independent reconnaissance detachment (IRD), composed of an MRC. When BLUEFOR counterrecon is effective, an IRD will attack into the screen to either collapse the screen or so fixate defending forces that scouts can infiltrate on the flanks without being observed. Most importantly, all reconnaissance assets, not just scouts, must be able to communicate successfully, which means effective positioning of retrans assets, and must provide timely and accurate reporting to maneuver commanders. Ideally, the scout platoon leader should be able to communicate on the maneuver net and provide guidance to company/team commanders. Too often, the normal intel processing method — from scout to S2 on O&I, then over the command net — either takes too long or loses its accuracy.

Third, once the enemy attack commences, the OPFOR seeks to destroy the lead company/team from initial positions. The initial positions (or ambush positions) are normally arrayed along the FEBA. Their task and purpose is to destroy the lead task force and force its piecemeal commitment into the subsequent positions. The initial positions are generally MRP (1 T-80 and 3 BMPs) or smaller in size and are supported by limited engineer assets. Individual vehicles are generally positioned in key terrain available. Keyhole positions in broken terrain are preferable, because they provide concealment and enable repositioning. Their effect is not only to destroy but disable forces unable to fix and bypass.

Obstacles will be emplaced only to disrupt routes of march on main avenues of approach. Once these forces have accomplished their task and purpose, or when ordered, they will disengage and reposition back in depth to subsequent positions. Disengagement criteria is normally determined by the status of enemy and friendly combat power or when ordered to withdraw.

The initial positions have a variety of resources to support disengagement. These techniques include persistent or non-persistent chemicals, indirect HE fires, smoke (indirect, smoke pots, or TDAMs), BRDM AT-5 overwatch positions, use of artillery delivered FASCAM, emplacement of the UMZ (similar to enemy VOLCANO), and deception (via radio traffic, positions, false obstacles and battle positions (BPs), etc.). Every asset will support the bounding overwatch disengagement of these forces,

so that they can safely maneuver to their subsequent positions to attrit more enemy forces without their movement being observed.

BLUEFOR units must plan to make contact as soon as they cross the LD. Units seem to think they will be able to attack unopposed past the LD until they reach the main engagement area or OPFOR obstacles. Remember the tasks for the security zone: attrit and delay. Therefore, BLUEFOR must conduct effective route and zone reconnaissance prior to the approach march. Early on, scouts must identify enemy forces and obstacles deployed forward and target forces with indirect HE fires and smoke. They must also report enemy locations to the advanced guard company/team in order to fix and bypass or destroy. Company/teams must plan likely areas along the approach march where they may need to dismount infantry to assist in destroying ambush positions or clearing intervisibility lines where contact is anticipated. Remember that aggressive massed movement will overwhelm OPFOR initial positions.

Fourth, the OPFOR will attempt to destroy the lead task force from subsequent positions. The task and purpose of the subsequent position is to destroy the lead task force main body in order to disrupt BCT maneuver and create separation within the BCT main body prior to contact with the forward positions. The subsequent positions are normally composed of an MRC (-) (two T-80s and six BMPs) in addition to combat power repositioning from the initial positions. These positions are supported with slightly more engineer work, primarily focused again on countermobility. These positions will develop

a more clearly defined engagement area using a series of disrupt obstacles to facilitate a piecemeal attack by the BCT (see Figure 1 for engineer intent graphics). These positions may remain in place and continue to destroy enemy forces or disengage and withdraw to the forward positions. Often, if the enemy forces fail to fix the subsequent position and bypass or avoid it, then this force will counterattack into the flank of the BCT main body or remain in place to counterattack into the rear.

Again, BLUEFOR units must conduct effective route and zone reconnaissance to identify these forces and any obstacles. Attacking forces must rapidly close with and destroy these forces or fix and bypass and deny them the ability to reposition. Only crews, platoons, and companies that are fully trained on their battle drills can accomplish this. Platoons must rehearse and be trained on the actions on contact battle drill. As in defeating initial positions, crews must execute proper scanning techniques (often, TCs fail to use NODs at night to scan or check light discipline), quickly identify and destroy targets, and cross-talk between vehicles and sections. There is no other method for success.

Fifth, as previously mentioned, the OPFOR must successfully reposition forces from initial to subsequent to forward positions or counterattack with forces out of contact. This supports the overall task and purpose of the security zone. Therefore, all friendly forces are required to have all obstacle work completed, planned tactical and protective obstacles, planned situational obstacle locations, and planned chemical target locations on their graphics to facilitate movement and prevent

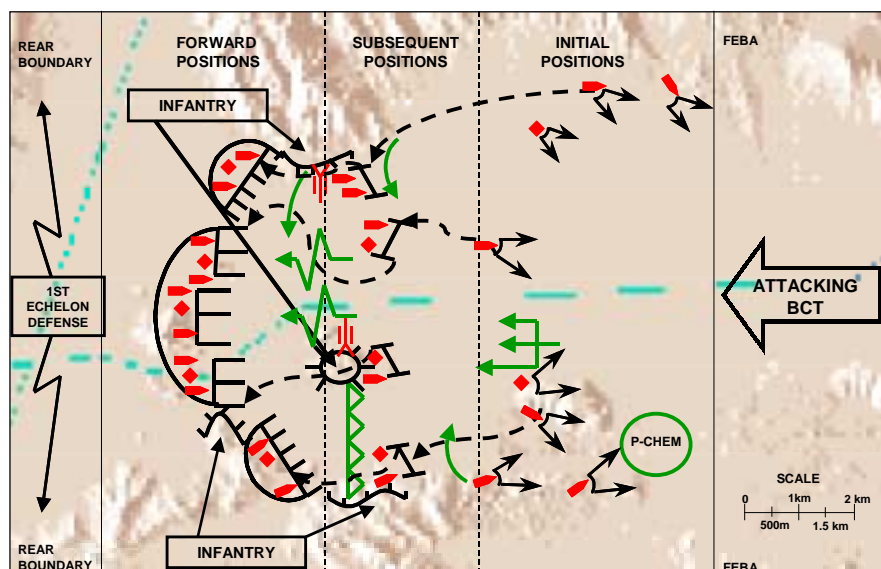


Figure 1: Security Zone Concept Sketch

fratricide. Any planned passage of lines will be rehearsed and forces identified (usually dismounted infantry) to open and close passage points. All units attached to the MRB in the security zone must continually update the MRB commander on the location of all forces in sector and any movement that they make, especially if they are withdrawing through positions. All units must have a planned passage point through the obstacles.

The most difficult force to withdraw is the infantry. Normally, one MRP is tasked to support their disengagement. A T-80 and a BMP overwatch, while another BMP supervises the upload of infantry onto trucks prepositioned in hide sites. Once uploaded, this BMP leads the infantry through the rearward passage of lines, while the other two vehicles successfully bound back. (The new BMP II greatly increases the OPFOR's ability to reposition infantry with its ability to carry up to five soldiers and their equipment.) Furthermore, each MRC, the MRB reserve, and the regimental combined arms reserve will have timed, during both day and night, all possible repositioning and counterattack routes. The MRC commanders will turn in this information as well as a completed defensive checklist and sector sketch at an MRB coordination meeting held between 3-9 hours prior to the NLT defend time. (*Editor's Note: The MRB Defensive Checklist is available in MS Excel format on our website at www.knox.army.mil/armormag/ma00indx.htm.)* Finally,

all combat multipliers support the withdrawal of forces disengaging. The goal is for forces to disengage and reposition laterally without being identified and with no loss of combat power.

Most importantly, BLUEFOR must expect OPFOR repositioning and designate scouts to look for this. Attacking forces must maintain contact with the enemy or use special munitions to deny potential counterattack routes on the flank or repositioning routes. Artillery delivered FASCAM, indirect HE fires, and the air VOLCANO are the most effective methods. Again, this is all predicated on effective reconnaissance and terrain analysis to identify these targets. Furthermore, IEW assets should have identified OPFOR single channel unsecured nets and must jam them once contact is made.

Sixth, combat multipliers (specifically CAS, SOKOL, and indirect fires) must attrit, separate, and delay attacking enemy forces. CAS, SOKOL, and indirect fires each owe the MRB commander a company/team destroyed, if properly integrated into the security zone concept of operations. The MRB commander must have excellent situational awareness of friendly and enemy forces for this to occur. In addition, SOKOL must be effectively oriented into lucrative targets by crews in contact. This means that an individual track commander will call SOKOL on their frequency and give them a hasty contact brief to orient SOKOL on the current enemy situation, location of enemy and friendly units,

suggested air battle positions and engagement areas, suggested routes of maneuver, and methods of orienting SOKOL's fires (smoke, terrain, illumination, PAQ-4s, etc.). Indirect fires are successfully integrated into the security zone to complement direct fire planning. As the MRC commanders proof their engagement areas, they identify dead space, probable breach effort locations, and choke points which facilitate indirect fires, and they mark these with TRPs and "plugger" the grids. These TRP locations are then passed from the MRC commander to the MRB commander and then to the regimental chief of artillery. The successful integration of these combat multipliers into the MRB commander's scheme enables their success in destroying approximately three company/teams in total.

In order to deny the OPFOR success in their employment of combat multipliers, BLUEFOR must be trained on force protection measures. BLUEFOR must array combat multipliers (specifically, intel, fire support, air defense, and IEW) to support movement on multiple avenues of approach to retain flexibility. Don't fight the plan. If the OPFOR is rapidly destroying the unit on its primary direction of attack, do not continue to "follow the blinking lights." Plan flexibility. Most importantly, crews, platoons, and companies must exercise proper dispersion along the approach march and execute the following battle drills: react to indirect fire, react to air (CAS and attack aviation), and react to ATGM. Finally, don't hesitate. Make a decision, quickly synchronize combat multipliers, and execute violently.

Seventh, the MRB must shape the battlefield with combat multipliers in order for the forward positions to destroy the remaining enemy [TF (-)] in the main defensive area. The task and purpose of the forward positions is to complete the destruction of the BCT in order to provide time and space for 1st echelon defensive preparation. The forward positions are normally composed of an MRC(+) in addition to the forces which repositioned from the initial and subsequent positions. The engineers give the greatest support to this engagement area. The focus is on countermobility and survivability. Often, only a few two-tier holes will be dug, in order to maximize dozer assets in the countermobility role (tank ditch). This trade-off is decided only after careful analysis of the terrain. The countermobility and deception efforts must force the enemy to attack where the MRB commander wants. Ef-

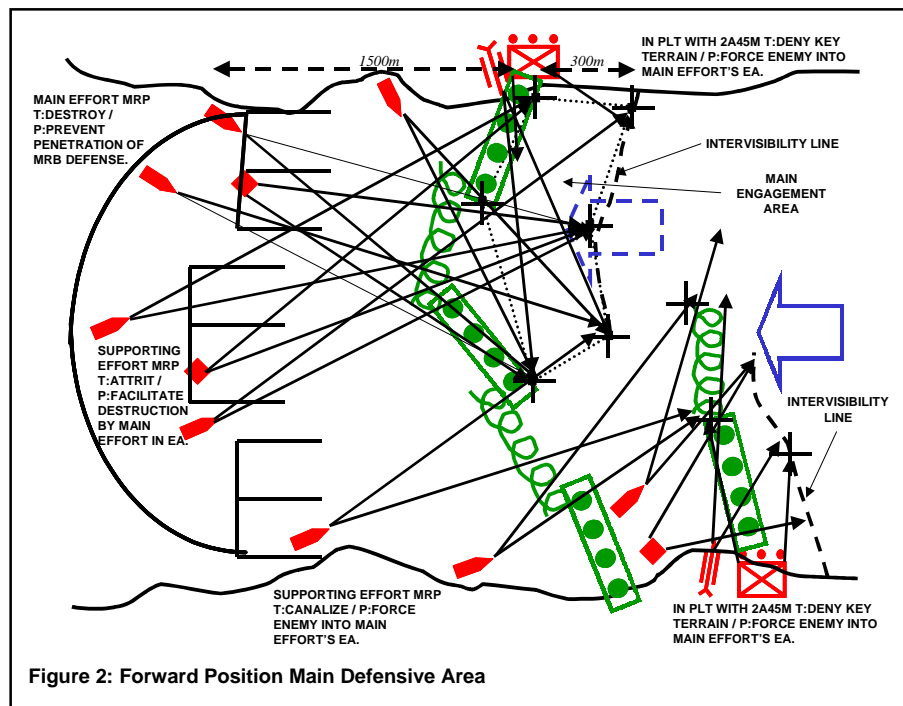


Figure 2: Forward Position Main Defensive Area

fectively placed initial positions, subsequent positions, tactical obstacles, deception, and AT fires will force the enemy into a kill sack composed of devastating cross and volley fires. The direct fire planning in the kill sack will enable rapid destruction of enemy maneuver forces from various sectors by maximizing flank fires. Tactical obstacles are positioned to optimize the weapons capabilities of the OPFOR and minimize the enemy's (see Figure 2: Forward Position Main Defensive Area). Situational obstacles are emplaced to deny mobility, re-seed obstacles, or build subsequent engagement areas for the MRB reserve (one T-80 and three BMPs), regimental combined arms reserve (three T-80s, eight BMPs, one ZSU 23-4, two SA-18 BRDMs, 50 infantry, two TDAMs, and three AT-5 BRDMs), or forces out of contact repositioning in depth. Infantry will be integrated into the start and end points of obstacles with assigned AT weapons to deny key terrain and prevent the enemy from penetrating along a seam and enveloping the MRB. 2A45Ms will be positioned on flanks to overwatch obstacles and establish final protective lines (much like an M-60 during a light infantry defense). AT-5s, if task organized for the defense, will be positioned to provide long range fires (up to 4 kms) to overwatch occupation of forward positions and destroy armored vehicles in depth throughout the main engagement area. Overall, an effectively constructed engagement area, direct fire planning and rehearsals, and proofing the engagement area will accomplish this task.

Again, BLUEFOR must establish reconnaissance in depth early in order to achieve success. The OPFOR's worst enemy during defensive preparation is artillery fires. Harassing fires delay the priorities of work tremendously, yet very rarely does the BLUEFOR employ them. BLUEFOR units also generally fail to establish observation to support indirect fires to disrupt defensive preparation. Also, recon assets must be focused on the most rudimentary intelligence requirements: Where are the OPFOR combat forces? (Determines initial, subsequent, and forward positions and possibly the reserve.) Where are the mine and wire obstacles? (Determines engagement areas.) Where are the dozers? (Determines survivability positions, tank ditches, and, ultimately, the engagement area.) Where are the SEEs? (Determines dismounted infantry locations.) Finally, they must look for and identify defensive prep to occur during limited visibility. These simple questions and answers should ultimately determine OPFOR weakness.

Also, do not expect a perfect intelligence picture from your reconnaissance assets. Company/team commanders must be capable of effectively creating an enemy SITTEMP. For instance, when a "feed" comes in with a majority of the OPFOR countermobility work, a maneuver commander should be able to develop a SITTEMP of enemy maneuver forces based on weapons capabilities and terrain. Too often, the S2 is blamed for a poor read when maneuver commanders could better estimate OPFOR direct fire planning and engagement area development in the defense. Also, units must effectively activate and reactivate their radar Critical Friendly Zones (CFZs) throughout the attack at critical defiles and breach locations. Finally, all combat multipliers must be focused at the likely breach site (point of penetration) and at command and control (for instance, IEW assets jamming both red and green nets; destructive artillery fires focused on the RAG and DAG to prevent effective OPFOR fires and in observed OPFOR BPs, CAS focused on denying adjacent OPFOR combat power from repositioning or destroying the reserve or CAR, etc. Of course, all of this depends on excellent reconnaissance and the ability to effectively see oneself and the enemy.

Eighth, the MRB commander must successfully deceive the enemy about his intent and the location of obstacles and maneuver forces. There are numerous deception measures employed by the OPFOR, and I will discuss only a few. The OPFOR commonly will use deception radio traffic and nets (both command and engineer) to portray a false intent. Often, false graphics will be positioned for easy enemy discovery and use.

False battle positions may be developed with scrapes in place of holes, single strand wire to represent a complete obstacle, and false turrets emplaced in the scrapes with heat and light sources to further add to the accurate deception. During limited visibility, MRCs will emplace false hides and battle positions with heat and lights sources in order to deceive night attack aviation (AH-64 and OH-58D) and LANTIRN-equipped night CAS. Reserves or forces not employed in defensive preparation may occupy sectors or avenues of approach to portray strength where a weakness truly exists.

Engineer work during the day is often deception, and the real tactical obstacles are emplaced during limited visibility. Sometimes smoke is employed to obscure the engineer preparation until hours of limited visibility. In addition, smoke is used to further deceive and disrupt the

enemy. Often smoke is fired on a different avenue of approach than the counterattack route. Units often fixate on smoke, enabling OPFOR forces to counterattack into the flank of enemy forces who are convinced that the counterattack is actually coming through the smoke. Finally, the MRB often launches a false counterattack force composed of CSS assets dragging concertina wire to replicate an MRC-size counterattack force to deceive JSTARS and other intel-gathering assets.

Quite simply, there is no replacement for confirming any reports with human eyes. BLUEFOR must not get focused on the intelligence feed. Don't take JSTARS for granted. All intel sources must be validated by observation.

This article describes the key tasks an MRB must complete to successfully conduct a security zone. It also offers some simple strategy to defeat the OPFOR mechanism for success. Attacking units must understand that a security zone battle will extend through multiple layers of contact in depth, and forces are arrayed to reposition or counterattack when out of contact. This battle is a contest of controlling the tempo. The OPFOR is usually vastly outnumbered and must buy time and space to reposition forces to create multiple engagement areas in depth. BLUEFOR units will inevitably fail if they are not supported with effective reconnaissance, if they are hesitant to execute maneuver, or if they are not ably supported by synchronized combat multipliers. On the contrary, friendly reconnaissance in depth and effective integration and synchronization of the OPFOR combat multipliers enables the MRB to focus on a direct fire fight where the enemy is attacking piecemeal into the engagement area. In summary, success is determined by one's ability to see oneself and see the enemy.

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